their nationhood, and that this must stop. In a telephonic conversation with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, on 1 April, Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh had conveyed India's deep distress and told him that by virtually imprisoning President Arafat, Israel was compounding difficulties rather than lessening them, thereby making the task of peace more difficult.

Tour to neighbouring countries by ministry of external affairs

3884. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has visited China and other neighbouring countries during April, 2002;

(b) if so, the details of the meeting held by him with foreign dignitaries and the matters discussed; and

(c) whether his visit has been successful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir. External Affairs Minister visited China, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Myanmar from March 29—April 06, 2002.

(b) **China**

External Affairs Minister (EAM) met Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan and Mr. Dai Bingguo, Minister, International Department of the CPC. He also called on Vice Premier Qian Qichen and Premier Zhu Rongji.

Issues discussed during the visit of EAM to China included visit of Prime Minister to China, clarification of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), bilateral dialogue mechanism on counter-terrorism, trade and economic cooperation, tourism and provision of hydrological data pertaining to the Brahmaputra river during flood season.

Republic of Korea

EAM called on President Kim Dae Jung and had discussions with his counterpart Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong.

Issues discussed included strengthening of bilateral relations through more frequent high-level political and parliamentary exchanges; enhanced exchanges in the defence field; dialogue on counter-terrorism and on security issues; and cooperation at international forums including the United Nations.

The first meeting of the India-ROK Joint Commission at the Ministerial level was also held. Both sides discussed trade and investment issues including cooperation in infrastructure projects, civil aviation, information technology and communication, culture and science & technology. Agreed minutes were signed.

Thailand

EAM called on Prime Minister Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra and held discussions with Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Foreign Minister of Thailand.

Issues discussed during the visit included deepening and strengthening of bilateral relations and international matters of mutual interest.

Myanmar

EAM attended the India-Myanmar-Thailand Ministerial Meeting on Transport Linkages held on April 5-6, 2002 in Myanmar. The three Foreign Ministers discussed a wide range of issues pertaining to development of transport linkages inter-connecting the three countries focusing on construction of a new highway through Myanmar. Such a network would promote trade, investment, tourism and people-to people interaction amongst the three countries and promote cooperation between South Asia and South-East Asia. The meeting agreed on following areas of cooperation:

(i) Construction of a highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar.

(ii) Construction of a highway from Kanchanaburi in Thailand to

Dawei deep sea port in Myanmar and shipping links to sea ports in India as part and parcel of one integrated project.

(iii) Promotion of trade investment and tourism through facilitation of transit of goods and people across the border.

(iv) Cooperation in human resource development.

Two task forces have been set up for implementation of this project, the one on financing to be chaired by Thailand and the one on technical matters to be chaired by India. The two task forces are now expected to meet on May 9, 2002 in Yangon to hold discussions.

While in Myanmar, EAM also called on Secretary I, Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Extradition Treaty with Thailand

†3885. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to consider on Indo-Thailand Extradition Treaty;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any step in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) India and Thailand have exchanged drafts of the proposed extradition treaty. The matter is at a preliminary stage.

Job Seekers' Death Abroad

†3886. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indian lose their lives in the allurement of getting jobs in foreign countries;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.